411 284 secured to the wood by a complicated series of half hitches, well illustrated by Murdoch.[1] As these back lashings slackened with frequent tension and changing [461] weather conditions, the owner wedged little plaques of wood, skin, or bone

[321]

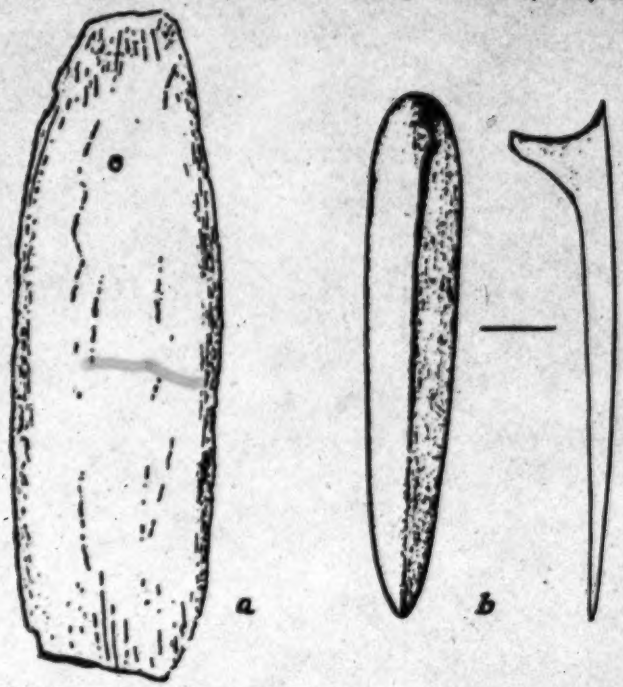

Figure 153. Braces to strengthen the joints of a bow. a: musk-ox horn; b: bone. IV.D.766, 602. 1/1.

beneath them (Figure 154), and when plaques no longer sufficed, he removed the lashings altogether and rewound them, an operation that he could perform in about an hour. Defects in the horns were more serious, but not insuperable. I [461] have seen a native strip a bow down to the bare wood, fit it with two new horns, and relash the weapon ready for use in the space of 4 hours.

411 [283] [284] [237] 411

Figure 154. Plaque of rawhide, wedged under the back lashings of the bow. IV.D.79. 1/1.

The bowstring was made from five or six strands of sinew, twisted together. When stringing his weapon, the hunter sat on the ground and pushed the middle of the bow from him with his foot while pulling the horn towards him.

When the party of Indians with whom Hearne travelled in 1771 massacred some Copper Eskimo at Bloody Fall, near the mouth of Coppermine River, Hearne noticed that most of the Eskimo arrow heads bore triangular points of a slate-like stone, whereas the remainder had points of copper.[2] The Copper Eskimo we encountered were using only points of antler, bone, copper, or iron. [113]

[1] Murdoch, John: A Study of Eskimo Bows in the U.S. National Museum: Report of the U.S. Nat. Mus., 1884, fig. 6-34.

[2] Hearne: op. cit., p. 101.